



# Chambers's Journal

## SIXTH SERIES.

### 'JEROME' OF NOVA SCOTIA. A FORTY YEARS' SEA MYSTERY.

**F**INANCIAL Returns,' one of the Blue-books issued by the legislature of Nova Scotia, contains a very brief entry, the story of which is perhaps unique in the annals of public documents. It is simply the one line:

Jerome.....\$104.00

But behind it lies one of the strangest of mysteries—a sea mystery that, after the lapse of more than four decades, is still as impenetrable as it was on the day that gave it birth.

Who is 'Jerome'? No one knows. Whence came he? None can even guess. Why should his name appear in a Government Blue-book as receiving an annual amount from the country to which he never rendered a cent's-worth of service? Few can tell. Scarcely any of the members of the legislature know to what the entry refers; it has figured in the 'Financial Returns' for many years; it was there before the several provinces of Canada were welded into the present Dominion; it was there when Nova Scotia was a separate colony. In themselves these facts may not present anything that is particularly remarkable; but when taken in conjunction with 'Jerome's' strange desertion on the shores of the Land of Evangeline, and the impenetrable mystery that has ever since surrounded his identity, as well as his extraordinary demeanour, the matter may well take rank with any of the obscure cases that history records.

Some forty-two years ago the people living around Digby Neck—the narrow strip of land on the eastern side of the Bay of Fundy—one day sighted a ship in the offing whose movements were unusual; she seemed to be hovering aimlessly around the same spot; and when darkness fell she was still there. Her peculiar tacking was the subject of much comment among the fisher-folk, the only residents along that rugged coast. Next morning, when they turned their eyes seaward, the vessel had disappeared; but upon the beach were a small keg of water and a bag of

ship-biscuits, and by the side of them was a man, or, rather, what was left of one, for his legs had been cut off above the knees. The amputation had been recently done, and that it was the work of a skilful hand was demonstrated by the careful manner in which the raw stumps were bandaged.

The stranger was apparently about nineteen years of age, with flaxen hair and blue eyes; and from his clothing and delicate white skin it was inferred that he had been well brought up. He was nursed and cared for by one of the cottagers, and gradually recovered from the severe operation to which he had been subjected. But he was morose and silent; and his speech, if speech it could be called, consisted only of guttural sounds that none could understand, though efforts were made by many seafaring men who had a smattering of foreign tongues to ascertain his nationality. There was not a scrap of paper of any kind upon him to give the faintest clue to his identity; nor were there any marks on his clothing, which was of the best, to throw any light either upon his name or from whence he came. Whether, after his strange arrival on the shores of Nova Scotia, any attempt was made to teach him an intelligible language is not known; but certain it is that during the long period he has passed among the humble residents of Digby Neck he has not acquired their tongue, and he has never by speech conveyed as much as a single thought to any one.

The manner of his arrival was mysterious; he has remained a mystery ever since. For forty-two years he has been a man without a name, except that of 'Jerome,' which was given him by some of the fishermen who thought that one of the sounds he uttered resembled that word.

It was all very well for the poor people of the district to be hospitable towards the helpless cripple for a while; but it was difficult for them to earn a livelihood for themselves; and when they felt that they could no longer be burdened with his support, they applied to the Poor Com-

missioners to have the weight taken off their shoulders. But the appeal was in vain: the Commissioners did not see why they should take over the responsibility; 'Jerome' did not belong to Digby County. The aid of the legislature was then sought, and, pending investigation, it granted an allowance of one hundred and four dollars. That was 'Jerome's' first connection with the Blue-books of the province; and from that time to the present his name has regularly appeared on the pages of 'Financial Returns;' for investigation unravelled nothing of the mystery, and the legislature has continued the grant from year to year ever since.

Before the advent of the railway, 'Jerome' was an object of much interest to passengers by coach, who would observe him basking in the summer sun, and would stop to see him and inquire into his case. But eventually they got so accustomed to the sight and to the story that they contented themselves with simply acknowledging him by a wave of the hand as they passed. With the waning of interest and curiosity on the part of the public, together with the construction of the railway—which, unlike the old post-road, does not run near the shore of that locality—'Jerome' and

his strange story are now almost forgotten except by those in the immediate neighbourhood of Saulnierville, on the shores of the bay where he was landed, and where the women still adhere to the simple garb of the old Acadians, and the language spoken is that of the peasants of Normandy and Brittany in the time of Louis Quatorze.

'Jerome,' during the hot days of summer, still basks in the sun in front of the house where he lives with a French-Acadian family, and in winter he huddles close beside the stove. He partakes of such food as is placed before him; but he is still the same silent, morose person that he was when first discovered on the beach forty-two years ago. He keeps by himself as much as possible, and simply passes his days much after the manner of the beasts of the field. For more than four decades his early history has been as impenetrable as was that of the Man with the Iron Mask; and it is scarcely within the range of probability that the veil will now be torn aside. 'Jerome' is indeed a mystery, and in all likelihood he will go down to his grave without any one being able to even hazard a conjecture as to his identity.

## OUR LADY OF DELIVERANCE.

### CHAPTER IX.—AN INARTISTIC REPLY.



HERE, then, was the position: Mademoiselle was in dire distress through her brother's trouble, and was being urged or persuaded in various directions by the interested parties in the Château. Of these, the most dangerous, probably—certainly the most offensive from my point of view—was Colonel Lepard. If Roussel's indiscreet words meant anything at all, they meant that Lepard knew all about the Gaston des Comptes affair, if indeed he had not actually taken a part in bringing it about. Such knowledge, in the possession of such a man, and with such an object in view as mademoiselle and her fortune, was a thing to be feared. The Church, as represented by the Abbé Dieufoy and the lady who had arrived the previous day, might be trusted to fight valiantly for the prize they coveted; and mademoiselle was at all events safe in their hands.

The object of Roussel's appearance on the scene I could not imagine.

Vaurel and myself were the only disinterested parties in this many-sided conflict; we were practically outsiders, and had no standing in the matter beyond our keen desire to be of assistance to mademoiselle. I might perhaps even have taken exception, had I been so inclined, to my own complete disinterestedness; at all events, I had but one wish, and that was for made-

moiselle's good, and I doubt if as much could have been said of any of the others.

It was galling to be unable to do more than quietly wait and watch. However, as there was nothing else possible, I was fain to possess my soul in such patience as I could muster, and hope for some turn of events which might give me an active hand in the game.

Meanwhile the quiet life of the woods in Vaurel's company was restful and enjoyable, and I fished and smoked and accompanied him on his patrols, watched the Château, and waited for the wheel to turn. Vaurel and I went up to Mère Thibaud's for dinner each night; but Roussel showed a natural lack of appreciation of our company, and generally managed to dine before or after us. If by chance we overlapped one another at table, he nodded coldly to me, took no notice of Vaurel, and kept as much space between himself and us as possible. Why he kept hanging about was quite beyond us. More than once we caught a distant sight of him wandering about the woods, and more than once we were aroused in the night by angry demonstrations on the part of Boulot, who heard or dreamt of intruders. More than once I warned Vaurel to keep a sharp eye all about him, for I distrusted the artist entirely, and he did not strike me as at all the kind of man to take a blow without attempting a blow in return; but Vaurel only laughed

in his big hearty way, and promised to crack M. Roussel across his knee with one hand if he only gave him the chance.

It happened, however, that one day after breakfast we found ourselves entirely out of tobacco, and Boulot and I strolled up to the shop in the village for a supply of such as they had. Boulot never missed an opportunity of a village ramble with me, since his master objected to his going alone. It afforded him the double pleasure of scaring all the children he met, and of getting away from the sight and smell of the water for a brief space; and the massive and imperturbable gravity with which he trotted along, looking neither to the right hand nor to the left, scattering the women and children without ever deigning to cast a look upon them, always amused me greatly. We delighted the old dame's heart by carrying off all her minute stock of really smokable stuff, and resumed our triumphant progress through the village.

We strolled quietly along till we reached the top of the path that led down through the trees to the river, and commenced the descent, our feet making no sound on the carpet of fallen leaves. Boulot trotted on in front, and as he rounded the corner of the house I saw his ears stand suddenly upright, and he bristled all over. I heard a heavy splash in the water, and a surprised yell cut off short in the middle. Boulot's short tail stiffened like an iron spike, the stout hind-legs spurned the earth, and he launched himself at something in front. I got round just in time to see him fasten on Roussel's throat with a muffled howl, then dog and man went over backwards into the water, and Boulot gave a disgusted snort as they went under. A dozen feet farther out Vaurel rose with a choking cry and began thrashing the water helplessly with his one arm; and as I saw he was like to drown, I leaped in and made my way to him, leaving Boulot and Roussel to settle their quarrel as best they could.

Vaurel grabbed me spasmodically, and I shouted into his ear, 'Lie still. You're all right. I can swim like a fish. Let go, man, or you'll drown both of us.'

I got him by the back of the neck at last, and held his head above water, then swam with the current and gradually edged him in to the bank, and at last our feet touched bottom and we crawled ashore. Vaurel sat coughing and choking with the water he had swallowed, while I looked anxiously for the other two, and presently downstream in the direction of the weir I saw a black object rolling helplessly along: it was Master Boulot or his body. Of Roussel I could see nothing. I sped along the bank. If there was any spark of life in the old dog, he would have no chance if the undertow got hold of him. I got below Boulot, and swam out and managed to lay hold of him just in time. He seemed to be dead, but I dragged him ashore. While I sat

panting on the bank I held him upside down, pressed the water out of him, worked him like a pair of bellows, and blew the water out of his nose. There were pieces of a collar and necktie between his teeth, and I could not get them out. I worked away on first-aid lines, for I was loath to let the plucky old fellow slip away if there was any possible hope of his recovery. I made another attempt to pull the plunder from between his teeth, and was at length cheered by a vicious snap after a bit of the tie as I tore it away. Then he opened one eye, heaved a big sigh, and sneezed; and when I put him on to his feet he lay down and was very sick. I let him cough the water out till he could cough no more, and then picked him up, snuffling and snorting, and carried him home in my arms.

Vaurel was lying on the bank where we landed, still coughing up the water he had swallowed.

'Dead!' he asked as I came up with Boulot.

'No, he's coming round; but it was a pretty close shave.'

'What was it? What happened?'

'Do you really mean to say you don't know?' I asked.

'I know nothing. I had thrown out a line to pass the time, and was sitting on my heels watching it, when an earthquake struck me in the back, and then I seemed to be trying to swallow the river. Seems to me I must have been dozing.'

'It was that rascal Roussel. Boulot and I saw him heave you into the water, but we were too late to stop him. Boulot got him by the throat, and they tumbled in after you. I wonder where he's got to. Have you seen anything of him?'

'Peste! No,' he said, getting up. 'I didn't know he was there. The miserable! to sneak on a man like that. But if Boulot got his teeth in he's finished; and but for you, monsieur, Boulot and I should be finished too.' He gripped my hand and shook it heartily.

The miller in a white blouse, with his face and beard thick with flour-dust, came along the river-bank with one of his men to ask what the trouble had been; and, on our telling him, sent off his man to the village to inform M. Juliot the gendarme, so that everything might be in order. Then he hurried back to shut down one of his sluice-gates which had been open, so that, if the body of the artist had not yet got through, it might be the more easily found.

Presently Juliot came majestically down the wood-path with half the village at his heels. It was evident that he did not often get such a chance as this of distinguishing himself, and he made the most of it. He questioned us magisterially and made notes in his pocket-book. He looked at Boulot, who was lying on my bed, the centre of a widening damp spot. But Boulot

had had too much water to take any interest in gendarmes. He only wrinkled up his brows and his nose and snuffled disgustedly and curled himself up the tighter, and Juliot decided not to press investigations in that quarter.

Then a party crossed in the punt to the other bank, and we all set off with sticks and poles to search for the body. But it was not to be found; and after poking and rooting above the weir for more than an hour, the searchers streamed away down the river in a long straggling tail, and in time came straggling back as empty as they went.

Mère Thibaud had a full house that night, and nothing was talked of but the crazy artist's attempt on Prudent Vaurel. Boulot sat under his master's chair and received the distant homage of the villagers with dignified contempt, sneezing and snuffling at intervals as though the recollection of his cold plunge was still heavy on him.

The villagers decided that the artist was undoubtedly dead, and that it served him right. The body would rise in time, and that would be the end of it. They had never liked him. He was too stuck-up, and treated them as if they were dirt.

M. Juliot, as the representative of law and order, was in great form and very much in evidence. He condescended to take coffee and fine cognac with us, and discussed the case didactically. He was of opinion that something ought to be done, and was half-inclined to think that, failing the prosecution of Roussel—for the best of

reasons—for assaulting Vaurel, Boulot ought to be proceeded against in some way or other for assaulting Roussel. It was insufferable that the whole village should be terrorised by the great animal. 'Why, it was only a week or two since he killed the sheep-dog up at La Garaye, and next week it might be any one of them. *Dieu!* yes, it might be me myself, Juliot of the gendarmerie.'

'All right, you take him along, Juliot, my friend,' said Vaurel complacently. 'Here he is, quiet as a lamb; just take him right along and lock him up, and God help you in the doing of it, for nobody else will, and you'll want all the help you can get.'

'It's a veritable devil,' said Juliot, looking askance at Boulot, but not offering to touch him. 'When he's killed somebody else, M. Vaurel, you'll regret it; but then it'll be too late.'

'You leave Boulot alone, Juliot, and Boulot will leave you alone. If that fool of a sheep-dog hadn't flown at him he'd have been alive now; and if the crazy artist hadn't flown at me he'd have been alive now. It's just a bit dangerous to touch either of us—isn't it, old boy?' said Boulot's master, pulling one of his ears till his great white fangs showed and made the crowd shiver.

M. Juliot helped himself to some more cognac, and expressed his feelings in a loud '*Eh, bien!*' which no doubt covered many unexpressed thoughts on the subject, and then relapsed into silence profound if not eloquent.

## ORANGE-CULTURE IN SOUTH CALIFORNIA.

By D. WINGATE.



THE culture of the orange-tree has greatly increased in South California within the last few years, despite the many difficulties the growers have had to contend with. Florida was once the largest orange-producing State in the Union; Riverside, a county in South California, is now the largest orange-producing district in the world. Even Covina, a comparatively new orange-section, also in South California, last season (1899) shipped one hundred thousand boxes more than the whole State of Florida. Given suitable soil and plenty of sunshine, irrigation and cultivation have done the rest; and the result to-day is thousands of acres of beautiful trees in bearing, averaging about a hundred trees to the acre.

The celebrated 'seedless navel orange,' first produced in Riverside, practically gave South California its world-wide reputation for orange-growing; and this orange has completely thrown into the shade other varieties—such as Mediterranean sweet, Valencia, ruby and Malta bloods, St Michael's, and others less known. Growers

have discovered that, for size, flavour, and steady bearing, no other orange can compete with it.

The first year of the orange-tree's life in the orchard is a most critical period in its existence, because it has just been transplanted from the nursery, in which, during its growth for three or four years from the seed, it has been carefully nurtured, and is then worth from fifty cents to one dollar—that is, two to four shillings. The young trees are planted in the orchard in rows accurately measured off, eighteen by twenty feet apart.

The Washington navel orange-tree fruits the first year in the orchard, but it is only said to be in bearing the third year; and from that time it must be fed and watered with the greatest care if, at the age of twelve years, it is to produce seven or eight hundred pounds of fruit. Many of the most successful groves are of comparatively old growth, planted some twenty-two to twenty-five years ago; but the health and productiveness of these trees have been maintained by the generous expenditure of fertilisers—often amounting from a ton to a ton and a half to the acre, consisting of guano with necessary proportion



of potash and sulphate of iron—and also by the regular irrigation in summer every thirty days, and by incessant cultivation or breaking up of the soil, which is so apt to become baked by the sun. In the first instance the virgin soil is extremely fertile, but it cannot be drawn upon year after year with impunity; and the pioneers discovered this, to their loss, when the decadence of their orange-trees became evident. Young orchards pay while the soil is virgin; but it is no economy to spare either water or manure after the first year or two of bearing, if the orchardist wishes his trees to maintain their productiveness. Some growers state that slight blemishes on oranges denote too rich feeding of the trees; but I believe this opinion is held only by a minority.

The grower has practically nothing further to do with the oranges after they leave his orchard; the sorting, cleaning, grading, and final packing for the market are in the hands of the association packing-houses—unless, of course, the grower himself has been able to establish a brand and a packing-house of his own. Usually the grower is supplied with boxes by the association, and into them the oranges are loosely packed by his pickers, piled up on wagons, and taken into the packing-house. There the teamster receives a cheque or credit note for the owner, and these are kept three or four months, and used to check the amount then receivable from the association. The price depends upon the kind of season, and also upon the grade of orange, and runs from about ninety cents or one dollar up to two dollars fifty cents a box, the average being one dollar fifteen cents.

The first process at the packing-house is to weigh the fruit, and label it with the name of the owner, then put it aside for the brushers. In large houses the brushing is done by a machine; in smaller houses by boys and girls, who use small hand-brushes. Generally the packing-machine is conveniently placed so that the oranges roll down an incline to the sorters' table. Here imperfections only are noted, the quick and critical eye of the sorter rapidly rejecting the 'culls,' as they are called—namely, those oranges even slightly discoloured or blemished. Great piles of these 'culls' may be seen in labelled bins ready to be sold to the peddler for ten, twenty-five, or even fifty cents a box; if totally unsaleable they are returned to the owner, and scattered over the orchard and ploughed in as a fertiliser. The next process is that of grading, by which the oranges are sorted according to size. The grader is a somewhat intricate machine. From the hopper at one end, the oranges roll down an incline by the side of a revolving cylinder, along each side of which are two long slits widening towards the bottom, each size falling through its own special chute into a box below. The three grades of marketable oranges are the fancy, the choice, and the standard. After being graded, the oranges next come into the

hands of the packers, who are marvellously dexterous in their handling. They stand in front of the box to be packed, with the bin of oranges on the right and a bunch of tissue-paper wrappers on the left. Swiftly the right hand takes an orange, simultaneously the left hand seizes a wrapper, a sound of crumpled paper, and—hey, presto!—the orange is in the box. The last layer is left slightly protruding above the side of the box; over this are nailed three or four thin laths, with a space between so that the air may have free access; and from the nailer the box goes direct to the railroad-car. Many houses have a siding to the warehouse door. About three hundred and sixty-one boxes, weighing thirteen tons, are piled carefully into a car; the car is then sealed up, ventilators only being open; a large ticket is tacked to the side to tell where the fruit came from; and at last the oranges are ready for the swift freight-train to carry them eastward.

The packing-houses are extremely interesting, and in many instances have cost from ten thousand dollars to fifteen thousand dollars each, being equipped with the latest machinery, run by electricity, gasoline, or steam-power.

Quoting from the Annual Midwinter Number of the *Los Angeles Times*: 'Last spring the assessment returned 2,072,417 bearing orange-trees and 1,227,397 trees in their first year's growth. These citrus-trees produced in 1897, in car-loads of 336 boxes each, 7550; 15,152 car-loads in 1898, and 10,350 car-loads in 1899. The value of the output of 1899 is given by the Chamber of Commerce as 7,000,000 dollars.'

Lemons are always included in these assessments, as the railroad lines make no difference between the two shipments when reporting for the trade; as a rule the shipment of oranges is nearly double that of lemons. To the uninitiated there is little difference at a first glance between an orange orchard and a lemon orchard: there is the same precision in planting, the same glossy leaves, the same fragrant white blossom; but, unlike the orange, rarely does one see the lemon in its yellow rind, for it is picked green, and thus the tree is divested of its beauty, for the green lemon is an insignificant object. Latterly the orange, owing to the rivalry among the growers to be the first to ship oranges from California, has been gathered unripe; but these early shipments have brought so little profit to the growers that the fruit is generally allowed to remain three months longer until it is ripe and luscious for the table. Lemons are picked every month in the year; while oranges blossom in April, and the fruit ripens and is shipped from December of that year to June of the following year.

As yet nothing has been done to utilise the large number of 'culls;' but, as in France and Italy, manufactories will, no doubt, be started to obtain acids and essential oils from these 'culls' when the enormous water-power available in the

mountains, at whose feet so many orchards lie, has been fully developed.

Many difficulties have been encountered in the orange-culture of South California, of which not the least has been the white scale, an insect pest which threatened at one time the entire destruction of the orchards. Hundreds of acres were ruined; the trees seemed to be covered with snow, so greatly infected had they become. The climax was reached in 1888-89, when meetings were held by the growers, and the idea was mooted that some parasitic insect should be found to wage war upon this white scale. Half-a-dozen ladybird beetles were imported from Australia by the Agricultural Department, and liberated in an orchard; and in about a year the white scale totally disappeared. Other scales have caused trouble, but to no great extent. Fumigation is successfully resorted to, each tree being covered with a tent, inside which is liberated cyanogen gas. The fumigation is done at night to prevent decomposition of the fumes by the sunlight. It is a curious sight to see a whole orchard enveloped in these coverings, like a huge encampment on a field of battle. Frost, too, is an always expected danger, but is not experienced to the same extent as by the Florida growers, and frequently two or three years will pass without any damage being done. Wind is almost as great an enemy as frost, for the waving of the branches causes friction

between the leaves and the oranges, the latter being more or less scarred thereby. Great loss, too, is caused by the windfalls, hundreds of oranges being lost to the grower before they have come to perfection. Frost, however, may be considered an insidious enemy, and on that account is more difficult to fight, for its effects are not immediately apparent; instances have occurred in which the oranges have actually been shipped eastwards in good condition even to the eye of the grower and the packer, only to be declared unsaleable, as, on being cut open, the pulp was found almost rotten. An experiment to obviate the action of wind and frost has been tried—to house the trees collectively under one immense framework of wooden laths so placed at intervals as to admit sunlight and air, but sufficient to break the force of the wind. This scheme has been carried out successfully on the Everest Rancho, Riverside County, with such good results that the production of seventeen acres thus covered in has far exceeded that of any previous year. The more common expedient is to plant eucalyptus-trees in long rows across the general direction of the wind, thus forming a breakwind, much in the same way as the tea and coffee plants in Ceylon are protected.

Notwithstanding all drawbacks, orange-growing is a pleasant and lucrative occupation, especially when carried on in such a health-giving and equable climate as that of South California.

## ARRECIFOS.

### CHAPTER VIII.—A REPENTANCE.

**M**ORE than three months had passed away, and the shapely hull of the *Mahina* was eighteen inches deeper in the water than when she first anchored in the lagoon. During all this time fine weather had prevailed, and the boats had been constantly at work; the crews, however, being given plenty of liberty to rest and refresh themselves, by wandering about the nearer islands—fishing, pig-hunting, and bird-catching, or lying about, smoking or sleeping day or night, upon the matted floors of the houses of the little native village nestling under the grove of breadfruit-trees. In the hold of the brig tier upon tier of cases packed tightly with shell were firmly stowed for the voyage to Singapore—shell worth over eight thousand pounds; and night after night Rawlings would turn out the pearls upon the scarlet table-cloth in the cabin, and discuss their value with Barry and the other two officers.

‘Six thousand pounds, you say, Mr Barry,’ said the captain, rolling the gleaming iridescent things softly to and fro with his small, shapely brown hand, whilst the Greek drew deep sighs of pleasure as he watched.

‘At least that, sir,’ answered Barry, puffing at his pipe. ‘I have given you the lowest estimate of their value. If they bring nine thousand I shall not be surprised. As for the little box of seed-pearls—they don’t amount to much; the whole lot will not sell for more than a few hundred pounds.’

‘Poor Tracey!’ said Rawlings thoughtfully. ‘I must endeavour to find out by advertising in the London and colonial newspapers if he has any relatives. I should like to acquaint them with his death, and send them all of what would have been the poor fellow’s share, had he lived.’

Barry’s face never moved, but his right hand clenched tightly under his jumper; for Mrs Tracey had told him that her husband had informed Rawlings all about his family, and about a quiet little village called East Dene, on the coast of Sussex, where he had been born.

‘It is very generous of you,’ said Barry stolidly; ‘and if you can’t find out anything about his people, you may about those of his wife.’

‘I shall do my very best in both cases,’ replied Rawlings; ‘it will give me infinite pleasure to discover either his or his wife’s relatives.’

‘Did he leave no letters or papers which would give you a clue?’ asked Barry carelessly.

'Absolutely nothing; and although we were on the most intimate terms, he never spoke of his family; neither did his wife, poor little woman.'

The mate rose slowly from his seat. 'Good-night all. I'm going ashore to turn in. I think another fortnight will see us a full ship.'

Just as Barry had taken his seat in the dinghy and the crew were about to push her off, Barradas came to the gangway.

'I'd like to go ashore with you, Mr Barry, if you don't mind, and stretch my legs on the beach.'

'Certainly,' answered the mate coldly, as he hauled the boat alongside the ladder again. Barradas descended and took his seat beside him in silence.

For many weeks past Barry had noticed that the second-mate had sought every opportunity possible to talk to him; but he had, while being perfectly civil to him, repulsed the man's overtures. On several occasions the Spaniard, when Barry was sleeping on board, had come into his superior officer's cabin under the plea of talking about matters connected with either the ship or the boats, and each time Barry had let him see that he was not anxious for his company. In fact, he had had a hard struggle to conceal his abhorrence for the man. For the sake of the great interests at stake he endured his visits, but gave him no encouragement to talk about anything else than the ship's business; and then, with a curt 'Good-night,' the men would part, and Barradas would walk the main-deck muttering and communing to himself till dawn. Then he would resume his daily work with a sullen face and in moody silence.

The night was ablaze with the light of a glorious moon, floating in a sky of cloudless blue, as the two men stepped out of the boat and walked up to Barry's native house. Barradas was breathing quickly and heavily, and every now and then he would take a quick glance at the mate's grave, impassible face.

'Will you come in and sit down for a few minutes?' inquired Barry with cold civility.

'No, thank you;' and as the Spaniard struck a match to light his pipe, Barry saw that his swarthy face showed pale in the moonlight, and that his hand trembled. 'I don't want to keep you from your sleep. You have had a hard day's work in the boats, and I have done nothing.' He waited for a moment or two, but Barry did not repeat his invitation. With his hands in his pockets, he was gazing upon the moonlit lagoon, apparently oblivious of his subordinate's presence.

'I think I shall take a walk on the path running along the outer beach,' said Barradas presently, in an awkward, constrained manner.

Barry nodded. 'Just so. But there's nothing much to see except the graves of two of the crew of a whale-ship who were buried at the end of this island about four or five years ago. If you follow that path you'll come to the place in

about half-an-hour. Don't lose your way when you're coming back. I'll keep the boat ready for you to take you aboard again.'

Again Barradas looked at him as if he would have liked to say something more; but Barry's cold, set, and repellent face forbade it.

'Well, I think I'll go that far, anyway,' said the Spaniard; and then he added nervously, with a half-appealing look to the chief-officer: 'I suppose you're too tired for a yarn and a smoke?'

'I am,' replied Barry, with studied coolness and without moving his face.

The second-mate raised his dark and gloomy eyes and looked at him furtively; then, with something like a sigh, he turned quickly away and walked along the winding path that, through the jackfruit-grove, led to the next island.

Barry turned and watched him; and presently Velo, stripped to the waist, came out of the hut and stood beside his officer.

'Shall I follow him?' he asked in the Samoan language.

'Yes,' replied Barry quickly in the same tongue, 'follow him and see where he goeth. There may be some mischief doing; for this man hath for many days tried to thrust himself upon me. It may be that we have been betrayed. But stay, Velo; I will come with thee.'

Entering the house, he threw off his canvas shoes, belted his Colt's revolver round his waist, and in a few minutes he and Velo were following in the track of the Spaniard. Every now and then they caught a glimpse of him in the bright and dazzling moonlight, as he trudged steadily along the white sandy path. Once he sat down on the bole of a fallen coco-palm, leant his chin upon his hands, and seemed lost in thought. Then he rose again and set off at a rapid walk.

At the north end of the little island he came to a stop, for farther progress was barred by the wide channel separating Ujilong from the next island; the tide was flowing, and the connecting reef was covered with three feet of water. He stood a while, looking about him, and then turned toward a cleared space among the coco-palms, where a low square enclosure formed of loosely piled blocks of coral stood clearly out in the moonlight; in the centre of the square were two graves, one of which had at its head a cross, roughly hewn from a slab of coral stone.

The Spaniard leant with folded arms upon the wall, and for some minutes intently regarded the emblem of Christianity; then, stepping over the wall, he walked up to the graves, took off his cap, and knelt beside the cross, bending his head reverently before it.

Hidden behind the boles of the coco-palms, Barry and Velo watched and listened; for now and then a sob would escape from the man as he prayed and made the sign of the cross. Suddenly he laid himself down upon the grave, placed his out-

spread hands upon the foot of the stone, and the listeners heard him weeping.

'Mother of Christ, and Jesu Most Merciful, forgive me my sins,' he cried, rising to his knees and clasping his hands. 'Here, before Thy cross, I plead for mercy. Holy and Blessed Virgin, help and save me, for no longer can I bear the guilt that is on my soul.'

Again he bent his head and prayed silently; then he rose, put on his cap, stepped over the low wall, and set off almost at a run towards the village. Barry and Velo followed him till he reached their house. Here, for a moment or two, he stood before the entrance as if in doubt. He then went inside and called:

'Where are you, Mr Barry?'

'Here,' said Barry, as he stepped inside. 'What is the matter, Barradas? You look ill. Sit down.'

'Yes, I will sit down, for I have something to tell you—something that I should have told you long ago. I will make a clean breast of it all—before I go mad. Mr Barry, your life is in danger. Rawlings and the Greek mean to murder you before the brig reaches Singapore.'

Barry drew an empty case up to the rude table and sat down.

'I don't doubt it,' he said quietly. 'Now, tell me, before you go any further, the true story of Tracey's death.'

'As God is my witness, I will tell you all—all. Tracey was not mate; he was captain and owner.'

'I know all *that*—have known it for some time; but I want to know how he died.'

'Rawlings shot him. One day Tracey came on board unexpectedly, and found him in his cabin making a tracing of a chart of this lagoon. I heard them quarrelling, and then heard a shot. When I ran below, Tracey was dead. Rawlings had shot him through the head. That was two days before you came on board.'

'You had better go on board now,' Barry said to Barradas half-an-hour later. 'I will trust you to help me to undo some of the wrong you have done;' and he held out his hand.

#### CHAPTER IX.—PREPARING FOR THE 'LITTLE CELEBRATION.'

**D**AY after day the work of gathering its hidden wealth from the bottom of the lagoon went on. Once in every week Barry managed to communicate with Mrs Tracey personally or by letter, telling her how matters were progressing and asking her to be patient.

'In a week or two,' he wrote, 'we shall have possession of the brig—without bloodshed, I hope. Now that Barradas is with us, I feel less anxiety.

Whether they suspect him or not we cannot tell; but the steward said that they (Rawlings and the Greek) certainly have a secret understanding of some sort concerning Barradas. He believes they have planned to murder him as they first planned to dispose of me. They are closely watched, not only by the steward, but by Barradas himself, who plays his part of the "good comrade" well. Heaven forgive the man for his past crimes, for he is, I know, deeply penitent. Your supposed death weighs heavily on his mind; but he must not know anything more than he does at present. I fear the joy of knowing you are alive would be too much for his excitable, impassioned nature. He would be unable to restrain himself.'

Barry received an answer in a day or two, telling him that she too had made good progress down at Tebuan.

'We have quite forty tons of beautiful shell here now, either cleaned or rotting-out at various places on the beach. Last week the people told me that they were diving three miles from here, and could see the brig's masts quite distinctly. I warned them to be careful. As for the pearls, I am afraid I must show them to you after all; I am tired of looking at them by myself. There are over sixty now for the necklace, nearly every one of which is a perfect match. I have them apart from the others in a box of soft white wood, which Pané made for me, and I have called the box "Rose Maynard's Dot."

'Now I must tell you some other news. Yesterday two ships were seen a long, long way off to the westward. I have no doubt but they are the first of the sperm-whalers making south again towards New Caledonia and the New Hebrides. We are sure to see several more; and if any of them comes within eight or ten miles I could have a letter sent off for you—it would perhaps get to Sydney long before the *Mahina*; and just imagine how delighted *some one* would be to hear from you.'

So Barry wrote two long letters, one to Rose and one to Watson, telling them both that he hoped to see them in less than six months. To Watson he told the whole of the strange tragedy of the *Mahina*, and of the marvellous escape of Mrs Tracey, adding in conclusion:

'Do not tell Miss Maynard all these horrors. They would cause her intense anxiety; and I have only said that Mrs Tracey's husband is dead, and that she is returning to Sydney in the brig. I am in hopes we may run across a man-of-war; if so I can get rid of these gallows-birds for a time, at any rate, before they are brought to trial. Good-bye, and good luck.'

He sent the letters down to Tebuan by Velo that night, and then work went on with renewed energy—Barry with the boats, Rawlings and the Greek amid the stench of the decaying oysters on the sandbank; and Barradas, silent, grim, and determined, attended to the brig, and began to



prepare her for sea again, assisted by the four white seamen.

Then came the time when the divers ceased from work, and the last boatloads of shell were landed on the islet, for the little brig had as much stowed in her hold as she could carry with safety, and was deeper in the water than she had ever been since the day she was launched.

That evening, whilst Rawlings and the boatswain were ashore at the village bathing in fresh water from a native well, Barradas and the steward were quietly at work in the trade-room opening a case of Snider carbines, quickly cleaning and oiling the breeches, and then passing them, with an ample supply of cartridges, into the eager hands of Joe and Velo, by whom they were carried into the fo'c'sle and given to those others of the crew then on board. Each man received his weapon in silence and hid it under the mats of his bunk.

'When is it to be, Velo?' asked one of the divers.

'It may be to-night,' replied the Samoan. 'Be ye ready when the time comes.'

Returning to the trade-room, the empty case was nailed up again, and another full one lifted on top of it. In the main cabin itself there was a stand of twenty rifles with cutlasses; but these were not disturbed for the time, as the absence of even one would most likely be noticed by Rawlings.

After they had finished their bath the captain and Paul, carrying their towels in their hands, strolled up to Barry's house. He had just lit his lamp, and, with a native sailor helping him, was packing up his traps, for this was his last night on shore.

'Ah! putting your house in order, Barry?' said Rawlings blandly.

'Yes; just straightening up a bit, and getting my gear ready to be taken on board,' he replied.

'We must have a little bit of a celebration to-night, I think,' resumed Rawlings, 'and let the men have a final fling too. They have worked splendidly under your management; and our success is largely due to you.'

Barry nodded. 'Yes; they've worked very well indeed; and I think we might have a bit of a celebration, as you suggest. Let us say to-morrow night—I'm a bit too tired to-night—and at daylight I'll start off with Velo and shoot a couple of pigs for the men. They'll think a lot of that.'

'Quite so! A first-rate idea, Mr Barry. They can have the whole day and night to themselves.' Then, after a pause, he began to discuss with his officer the probabilities of the future—the return of the *Mahina* and the establishment of a permanent pearling station on the lagoon.

Barry listened, now and then making a suggestion of his own, for which, as usual, Rawlings thanked him effusively.

'And you think, Mr Barry, that this lagoon can be fished for many years?' he inquired.

'Certain. It would take us four or five years as we have been working, without touching the deep-water patches. The bottom of this lagoon is paved with shell. There are hundreds of thousands of pounds' worth of shell in it yet, let alone the pearls.'

The Greek's greedy eyes lit up and his white teeth set. 'Ah! ah! ah!' he said, pantingly.

'Well, we shall have our celebration to-morrow night, Mr Barry,' said Rawlings genially.

'Yes, we shall wind up everything by a good time to-morrow night,' answered the mate with unusual warmth, as, after some further talk, he walked down to the boat and went off on board with the others.

Just before supper Barry strolled along the main-deck. Barradas was in the waist, leaning over the bulwarks, smoking, and watching the movements of some large fish in the phosphorescent water. Barradas raised his head as the mate came near, and looked at him inquiringly.

'Not to-night,' said Barry in a low voice as he passed; 'but is everything ready?'

The second-mate nodded.

'Let the men go ashore if they wish.'

'We could do it now—easily,' muttered Barradas as the mate again passed him.

'No,' said Barry quickly; 'to-morrow night will be best. I have something on shore which must be attended to. But I'll be back early in the afternoon.'

As soon as supper was over Barry turned in, telling the steward to call him at daylight. Rawlings and the others sat up late; but their talk did not disturb him, for he was really tired, and meant to get a good night's rest to fit him for the work he had in hand on the following day and night.

At daylight he was aroused, and after a cup of coffee and a biscuit he and Velo, each carrying a rifle, set out in the dinghy, with two hands in her, towards one of the islands on the north side of the lagoon. Here, in full view of those on board the brig, they drew the boat up on the beach, leaving the two native sailors with her, and then struck off into the palm-grove, walking steadily on till they reached the centre of the island. Here, lying or sitting about under the trees, were the whole population of Tebuan, with Mrs Tracey in their midst.

All the men were armed with spears and clubs, and some were clothed from head to foot in armour of coco-nut fibre; they all sprang to their feet with a babble of excitement as the white man drew near; but at a sign from Mrs Tracey they at once stilled their voices and sat quietly down again.

Mrs Tracey, now thoroughly recovered from her accident, and her cheeks flushed with excitement, listened eagerly to Barry for some minutes; then

she beckoned the expectant natives to gather round her, and spoke to them in their own tongue.

'To-morrow night, my friends, all will be well. This white man is my good friend, and will restore to me my husband's *kaibuke* (ship), and ye shall see the two white men who murdered him and cast me into the sea, bound with links of iron, hand and foot. When that is done, then shall I give to every man of Tebuan a rifle, and as many bullets as he can carry, and five hundred sticks of tobacco; and every woman and child shall take whatever their eye desires—red and blue cloth, and beads, and biscuit, and rice; for ye have been my good friends—friends when I was sick and distressed and poor.'

A murmur of approval broke from the wild, savage-looking people; and then, one by one, they came and shook hands with Barry, and quietly dispersed to fish and hunt, Mrs Tracey warning them not to show themselves anywhere on the inner beach, for fear they might be seen from the ship.

Barry remained talking to Mrs Tracey for another hour or so, until Velo and some of the Tebuan men appeared carrying a large boar which they had shot. This was at once sent off to the boat, as well as four or five turtles which had been captured.

'Good-bye till to-morrow night, then,' said Barry, holding out his hand. 'Now, remember, when you see two fires on the south-east islet, you and your people can start. On the beach you will find our two whale-boats, with some of the hands awaiting you. They will bring you all on board without making any noise. You and these two young women can hide in the sail-room; the men will be taken care of by Velo and our own men until I want them.'

'I will not fail to remember every word. Good-bye once more.'

At three o'clock in the afternoon Rawlings saw the dinghy leisurely returning to the brig. She was pulling in close to the shore, whilst Barry and Velo were walking along the beach, rifles in hand, looking out for a chance shot at a pig. Barradas heaved a sigh of relief when he saw them, for his nerves had been at a tension for many days past, and he feared that something fatal to their plans might occur at the last moment. That Barry had some other object in going ashore than pig-shooting he well knew, although he could not guess what it was; for, as a matter of prudence, Barry had not yet even told him of the friendly relations existing between himself and the people of Tebuan; and, except for that one night after the scene in the little cemetery, neither of them had mentioned Mrs Tracey's name. The Spaniard believed her bones to be lying a thousand fathoms deep, and Barry did not care to undeceive him, although the man's grief and bitter self-accusations for his share in

the tragedy had at first moved him to tell Barradas the truth, if only out of pity.

Very smart and clean did the *Mahina* look as the dinghy ran alongside and Barry stepped on deck. Her newly-painted sides shone snowy white in the bright tropic sun, and her decks had been scrubbed and scrubbed again with soft pumice-stone till they were as smooth to the touch as the breast of a sea-bird. Aloft, her brightly-scraped spars and carefully-tended running and standing gear matched her appearance below; and even the cabins had been thoroughly overhauled and repainted. The two large boats used during the pearling operations yet lay astern; for Barry, who, as Mrs Tracey said, 'thought of everything,' had his own reasons for delaying to hoist them inboard. 'Leave them till the last thing to-morrow morning,' he suggested to Rawlings, 'as the men are having liberty to-day.'

'You fellows must cook that pig and the turtle on shore,' said Barry to some of the crew who were leaning over the rail looking into the boat; 'we don't want a dirty mess made on the decks now.'

'Ay, ay,' responded Joe; and one of the other white seamen jumping into the dinghy, followed at a sign from Velo by two or three natives, she was pushed off from the side and rowed ashore with Velo in charge. The two whale-boats were already on shore with some of the crew, and the nude brown-skinned figures could be seen walking about on the beach, or gathering a last lot of coco-nuts for the voyage. At dark the dinghy returned, Velo being left to superintend the feast which the men were to eat on shore.

Before then, and while it was still daylight and Rawlings was below and the Greek on the poop, Barry and the second-mate were standing on the topgallant fo'c'sle, looking up and apparently scrutinising the condition of things aloft. Barry was speaking.

'Watch me to-night when you see me rise from the table after supper is over. I'll collar Rawlings, and you must tackle the Greek. The steward will be behind him to help you; but you must see that he doesn't get out his knife. He's as strong as a buffalo. Don't hurt him if you can help it. I have leg-irons and handcuffs all ready in my berth. We'll get all the help we want in a few seconds—before either of them knows what has happened. Are you clear?'

The Spaniard nodded his black head. 'Thank God it is so near!'

'Keep your head clear, that's all,' muttered the mate, who saw the boatswain coming towards them. Then he added in his natural voice, as he ran his eye up and down the fore-stay, 'Well, perhaps so, Mr Barradas; but give me wire any day for standing-gear; it's better in every way to set up, and looks neater.'

Then he went aft again and sat on the sky-

light smoking his pipe, now and then looking shorewards through the fast-gathering darkness. He had told Velo not to light the two signal-fires till it was quite dark.

Presently Rawlings, dressed as usual in a natty, spotless white duck suit, and smoking a cigar, came up from below.

'It's dark— isn't it?' he said, as he took a few brisk turns up and down the poop, taking off

his wide, soft hat of *fala* leaf to let the cool night-breeze play upon his head. As Rawlings walked past the light of the lantern hanging from the centre of the awning, just over the skylight, and Barry noticed the clean-cut, handsome features and calm, smiling face, he ground his teeth together, and thought of the Nemesis that in so strange a way was so soon to overtake the heartless little fiend.

## ECCENTRIC TESTATORS.



IN one respect a rich man might well envy a pauper, and that is in the absence of responsibility which the latter must enjoy when his time comes to join the majority; he has nothing to bequeath to others. The making of a will is a very serious undertaking, for the right or wrong fulfilment of the duty may work much good or much mischief after the testator has gone to the dust from which he sprang. It is much to the credit of human nature that most wills, so far as we can judge from the contents of those published in the newspapers, are drawn with care and foresight. It is an unusual thing to find one which is absolutely unjust or resentful in character, just as it is happily exceptional to meet with a human being in civilised society who exhibits so very disagreeable traits. Such exceptions naturally attract attention, together with such wills as exhibit other peculiarities of temperament on the part of the testators. For obvious reasons it would be improper to remark upon testamentary documents of recent date; but there can be no possible objection to reviewing some of the peculiarities of wills which were proved more than a century ago.

Although most of us would regard the making of a will as a very solemn act, there have been frivolous individuals who have treated the matter with such light-heartedness that they have actually written the document in rhyme. We should perhaps regard this as evidence of a sunny nature, rather than attribute it to any want of reverence or decorum. At least, so we should be inclined to regard the following poetical effort of one John Hedges, who died at Finchley, near London, more than one hundred and fifty years ago:

This fifth day of May,  
Being airy and gay,  
To hip not inclined,  
But of vigorous mind,  
And my body in health,  
I'll dispose of my wealth,  
And of all I am to leave  
On this side the grave,  
To some one or other,  
I think, to my brother;  
But because I foresaw  
That my brothers-in-law,

If I did not take care,  
Would come in for a share,  
Which I no ways intended  
Till their manners were mended—  
And of that, God knows, there's no sign;  
I therefore enjoin,  
And strictly command,  
As witness my hand,  
That nought I have got  
Be brought to hotch-pot;  
But I give and devise,  
As much as in me lies,  
To the son of my mother,  
My own dear brother,  
To have and to hold  
All my silver and gold,  
As the affectionate pledges  
Of his brother,

JOHN HEDGES.

Another poetical will is that of W. Jackett, who lived in Islington when that now thickly populated parish of London was a village separated from the Metropolis by many acres of smiling meadow-land. It may perhaps be noted here, by those who are under the impression that a will is of necessity bound to be full of legal subtleties and repetitions, that both wills were proved and remained unchallenged. Mr Jackett's will runs thus:

I give and bequeath,  
When I'm laid underneath,  
To my two loving sisters most dear  
The whole of my store,  
Were it twice as much more,  
Which God's goodness has granted me here.  
And that no one may prevent  
This my will and intent,  
Or occasion the least law racket;  
With a solemn appeal  
I confirm, sign, and seal  
This the true act and deed of

WILL. JACKETT.

It is a less pleasant task to quote wills which seem to have been dictated by vindictiveness and malice; unfortunately there are many such on record. It is universally held that to strike a man when he is down and powerless is the height of cruelty and cowardice; surely it is equally reprehensible for a man to hound another through a

posthumous document, such as a will, when the writer will obviously be beyond reach of retaliation. Some of these vindictive wills, we are sorry to say, aim at the widow of the testator, who takes this method of revenge on the defenceless woman whom he has vowed to cherish and protect. 'I give unto my wife, Mary Darley,' says one affectionate spouse, 'for picking my pockets of sixty guineas, . . . the sum of one shilling.'

Even one who was called a 'nobleman' was not ashamed to carry on a contentious warfare with his helpmate beyond the grave, for we find in 1719 the Earl of Stafford bequeathing 'to the worst of women, who is guilty of all ills, the daughter of Mr Gramont, a Frenchman, whom I have unfortunately married, five-and-forty brass halfpence, which will buy her a pullet for her supper—a greater sum than her father can often make her; for I have known when he had neither money nor credit for such a purpose, he being the worst of men and his wife the worst of women. Had I known their character I had never married their daughter, nor made myself unhappy.'

Another gentleman who wished his unfortunate partner in life to feel the weight of his dead hand was Charles Parker, a London bookseller. 'I give and bequeath to Elizabeth Parker'—so runs the will—'the sum of fifty pounds, whom, through my foolish fondness, I made my wife, without regard to family, fame, or fortune, and who in return has not spared, most unjustly, to accuse me of every crime regarding human nature, save highway robbery.'

Stephen Swain did not aim his parting shot at his wife—perhaps he had none—but he vented his spleen on certain married acquaintances thus: 'I give to John Abbott and Mary his wife the sum of sixpence each, to buy for each of them a halter, for fear the sheriff's should not be provided.'

The above is a neat way of telling one's friends to 'go and be hanged,' and compares favourably with the laboured effusion which follows—an extract from the will of one J. A. Stow: 'I hereby direct my executors to lay out five guineas in purchase of a picture of the viper biting the benevolent hand of the person who saved him from perishing in the snow, if the same can be bought for that money; and that they do, in memory of me, present it to Edward Bearcroft, Esq., a King's Counsel, whereby he may have frequent opportunities of contemplating on it, and by a comparison between that and his own virtue be able to form a certain judgment, which is best and most profitable, a grateful remembrance of past friendship and almost parental regard or ingratitude and insolence. This I direct to be presented to him in lieu of a legacy of three thousand pounds I had by a former will, now revoked and burnt, left him.'

Mr David Davis, of Clapham, had also a neat way of firing a parting salute, as will be gleaned from the following extract from his last will

and testament: 'I give and bequeath to Mary Davis, daughter of Peter Delaport, the sum of five shillings, which is sufficient for her to get drunk with for the last time at my expense.'

Whatever poor Mary Davis's feelings might have been, the next victim to a remorseless will—one Daniel Church—seems only to have himself to thank for being cut off with the proverbial shilling. He had apparently been guilty of an act of petty larceny, which his father punished in that way. The will says: 'I give and devise to my son Daniel Church only one shilling; and that is for him to hire a porter to carry away the next badge and frame he steals.'

Joseph Dalky takes the opportunity afforded by his will of insulting his son-in-law in terms which doubtless had a pungency once, but which are hardly comprehensible to the modern reader: 'I give to my daughter Ann Spencer a guinea for a ring or any other bauble she may like better; I give to the lout her husband one penny to buy him a lark whistle . . . and this legacy I give him as a mark of my appreciation of his prowess and nice honour in drawing his sword on me (at my own table), naked and unarmed as I was, and he well fortified with custard.'

A gruesome legacy is that of Philip Thicknesse: 'I leave my right hand, to be cut off after my death, to my son; and I desire it may be sent to him, in hopes that such a sight may remind him of his duty to God, after having so long abandoned the duty he owed to a father, who once affectionately loved him.'

Another father seems apparently to have begun his will with the determination of punishing an unruly son; but, as the fairy stories say, all ends happily. We refer to the will of Richard Crawshay, the founder of the famous Welsh ironworks. It runs thus: 'To my only son, who never would follow my advice, and has treated me rudely in very many instances; instead of making him my executor and residuary legatee (as till this day he was), I give him one hundred thousand pounds.'

Some testators exhibit a curious interest in the disposal of their earthly remains, and those of limited means will often saddle their surviving relatives with the great cost of removal and burial in some distant place or foreign country. Here is a will in which the writer is most particular in the way his dead body should be adorned. It is an extract from the will of George Appleby: 'My body—after being dressed in flannel waistcoats instead of a shirt, an old surtout coat and breeches, without lining or pockets, an old pair of stockings (shoes I shall want none, having done with walking), and a worsted wig, if one can be got, I desire—may be buried in as plain a manner as possible, wherever my widow shall think proper.'

Here again is a curious extract from the will of one Edward Molyneux, who at the beginning



of this century was a wax and tallow chandler of Mayfair, London: 'I am sometimes accustomed to carry bank-notes in the fob of my breeches. Please to search the said breeches to see if there are any.'

One John Baskerville, of Birmingham, made an express condition as to the disposal of his body, as follows: 'My further will and pleasure is, and I hereby declare, that the devise of all my goods and chattels, as above, is upon the express condition that my wife, in concert with my executors, do cause my body to be buried in a conical building, in my own premises, heretofore used as a mill, which I have lately raised higher, and painted, and in a vault which I have prepared for it. This doubtless may appear a whim; perhaps it is so; but it is a whim for many years resolved on, as I have a hearty contempt for all superstition,' &c.

Dr William Dunlop, one of the pioneers of the Canada Company, made a characteristic and amusing will:

'In the name of God: Amen.

'I, William Dunlop, of Gairbraid, in the township of Colborne, district of Huron, Western Canada, being in sound health of body, and my mind just as usual (which my friends who flatter me say is no great shakes at the best of times), do make this my last will and testament, as follows:

'I leave the property of Gairbraid, and all other lands and property I may die possessed of, to my sisters Helen Boyle Story and Elizabeth Boyle Dunlop; the former because she is married to a minister whom (God help him!) she hen-pecks; the latter because she is married to nobody, nor is she like to be, for she is an old maid, and not marketrife. . . . I leave my silver tankard to the eldest son of old John, as the representative of the family. I would have left it to old John himself, but he would melt it down to make temperance medals, and that would be sacrilege. However, I leave my big horn snuff-box to him; he can only make temperance horn-spoons of that. I leave my sister Jenny my Bible, the property formerly of my great-great-grandmother, Bethia Hamilton, of Woodhall; and when she knows as much of the spirit of it as she does of the letter she will be another guise Christian than she is. I also leave my late brother's watch to my brother Sandy, exhorting him at the same time to give up Whiggery, Radicalism, and all other sins that do most easily beset him. I leave my brother Alan my big silver snuff-box, as I am informed he is rather a decent Christian, with a swag-belly and a jolly face. I leave Parson Chevase (Mag's husband) the snuff-box I got from the Sarnia Militia, as a small token of my gratitude for the service he has done the family in taking a sister that no man of taste would have taken. I leave John Caddle a silver teapot, to the end that he may

drink tea therefrom to comfort him under the affliction of a slatternly wife. I leave my books to my brother Andrew, because he has been so long a Jungley Wallah [bushman] that he may learn to read with them. I give my silver cup, with a sovereign in it, to my sister Janet Graham Dunlop, because she is an old maid and pious, and therefore will necessarily take to horning. And also my granma's snuff-mull, as it looks decent to see an old woman taking snuff.'

This will was duly signed, and an important codicil afterwards added, but in deference to a friend who doubted its validity he took advice on the subject. The friend who examined it pronounced it eccentric, but not on that account illegal or informal. However, his widow was often in the law-courts afterwards, her motto being 'We'll fecht it oot!'

Of a far more amiable, although often silly, kind are the wills which affect pet animals. We all know that affection for cats, dogs, and birds is often carried to an absurd pitch, and that people will sometimes lavish upon their furry or feathered friends luxuries which they would under no circumstances give to their human acquaintances or relations. A Mrs Hannah White, in 1798, left twenty-five pounds per annum to the mother of one of her servants for the maintenance of five cats during the course of their natural lives; five pounds being a very liberal provision for each pussy, as our readers will admit. But this lady, it should be observed, also left a thousand pounds each to two hospitals, legacies to her domestics, and the residue of her estate, which was considerable, to her doctor, or apothecary, as he was called in those days. Her relatives appealed against the will; and in the sequel the apothecary's claim was struck out, but the other provisions—including the bequest to the cats—were confirmed.

Another lady, Elizabeth Hunter, a wealthy spinster, was at great pains to provide for the future of a pet bird, as the following extract from her will testifies: 'I give and bequeath to my beloved parrot, the faithful companion of twenty-five years, an annuity for its life of two hundred guineas a year, to be paid half-yearly as long as this beloved parrot lives. . . . And I do bequeath to Mrs Mary Dyer, widow, my foresaid parrot, with its annuity of two hundred guineas a year. . . . And I give to Mrs Mary Dyer the power to will and bequeath my parrot and its annuity to whomsoever she pleases, provided that person is neither a servant nor a man; it must be bequeathed to some respectable female. . . . And I also will and desire that twenty guineas may be paid to Mrs Dyer directly on my death, to be expended on a very high, long, and large cage for the aforesaid parrot; it is also my will and desire that my parrot shall not be removed out of England.'

There are many persons who would be glad

enough to acquire an income of two hundred guineas a year upon such conditions, for the keep of the bird could hardly cost as many pence. The anxiety that her pet should not fall into the hands of a man, possibly because it might learn to express itself in coarser terms than might be desirable, is very amusing, and seems to give us an insight into the testatrix's personality which we should otherwise be without. It would be interesting to know the sequel of this story—whether the parrot died inconsolable for the loss

of its mistress, and was speedily replaced by a counterfeit so that the annuity should not lapse, or whether it lived to a green old age. Possibly it may be alive now. It may, in fact, be that identical bird which we hear mimicking the cats, dogs, and street-cries of the neighbourhood as we write. Its speech is alternated with the most ear-splitting screeches, and we cannot conceive how any one can harbour such a nuisance—unless, indeed, our worthy neighbour be paid a handsome annuity for doing so.

## CASHIERED.

By ANDREW BALFOUR, Author of *By Stroke of Sword, &c.*

### I.



THE lieutenant was but a boy, a product of the English public school and of Sandhurst, with an incipient moustache and a face which six months before had been fresh and ruddy as a fox-hunter's at Christmas-tide. But the dreaded West Coast had done its work, in part at least; and it was a haggard, weary, yellow visage which, with a pair of field-glasses, swept the dull-green fringes of the relentless bush, and then turned to the little garrison. The lieutenant gave an order, pointed with his finger, and from a loophole in the stockade came a flash, a sharp report. As if in answer to a summons, a black shape sprang up from the edge of the forest cover, screamed wildly, and with convulsive twitchings pitched out into the open, rolled over and over, and lay still.

'Ready, lads!' sang out their officer; and the men of the frontier police prepared to do as they had done every day and many a night for the past six weeks.

They were a dusky lot, in ragged uniforms, with cheek-bones which told a tale of want of food, parched lips which were evidence of the muddy, brackish water that could scarcely moisten them and yet was all their comfort, and fierce wild eyes which spoke to wakeful nights and dread uncertainty. Day and night, night and day, had they watched and fought and suffered, and still the old flag drooped idly from its post in the simmering heat, and still they waited for relief with a hope which waned within them.

The lieutenant looked to his revolver, and with fingers which trembled a little rolled a thin cigarette and tried hard to muster up a cheery smile. It was a sorry attempt, for his nerves were giving way, and there was that in his blood which saps all joviality and makes the liver in very truth a seat of melancholy. There had been little loss in men, for the stockade was strong and high, and lead-coated stones and pot-legs, though ugly missiles, are none too efficient as regards the

searching of loopholes at eighty and a hundred yards; but to the lieutenant the scorching sun's rays, the empty stomach, the dry and burning throat, the want of sleep, and the utter loneliness were as bad—nay, worse—than the loss of half-a-dozen black fellows, faithful to the death though these might be.

It was his first experience of war, and there was no glory in the business. If he failed, few would ever learn that Fort Muti had held out to the bitter end against terrible odds, and fewer still would care. Men's minds were busy elsewhere, for the West Coast was not all Africa, and trouble was brewing with men of another colour and another clime. For all that, the lieutenant had done his duty, and much more than he imagined, for many things unknown to him depended on the safety of his outpost.

'Here they come!' he cried suddenly, and from every quarter of the encircling forest darted white puffs of smoke, and noises innumerable filled the air—the sharp rifle-crack, the heavy boom of the elephant-gun, the *bang, bang* of flint-lock muskets, and then the battle-yell of a savage foe. There was no answer from Fort Muti. Its defenders could not afford to waste powder on the scrub; but now came the rush. A horde of savages, their hair frizzed out into fantastic patterns, their bodies naked save for the loin-cloth, bounded into the open and raced towards the palisades.

'Give it them, men!' yelled the lieutenant, and they got it. It was the old Martini which served the black police, and the Martini bullet has driving-power. At such a range, in such a mass of humanity, each leaden messenger found a plethora of billets both temporary and permanent, and the assailants found things too hot for them. A few fanatics all, escaped the deadly hail and sprang at the defences, only to be dashed to earth with the butt or run through with the bayonet.

'The children of the white devil' had conquered once again. It could not last, however. The enemy had shown more boldness than hitherto, the cartridges were woefully less, and a fresh attack was clearly impending.

The lieutenant's heart sank within him, and yet he spoke a few words of praise and encouragement to his men. His speech was never ended. Distant but distinct there rang out a bugle-call, and then from the green depths around came the rattling crash of a fusillade and the constant *pop, pop, pop* of the ubiquitous Maxim.

Fort Muti was relieved.

'Splendid, my dear boy!' said a major of the line twenty minutes later. 'You have done capitally, and if I can manage it you'll have the D.S.O., for you deserve it if any one does. Now take a pull at this.'

Perhaps he guessed that the lieutenant was on the verge of disgracing his manhood.

## II.

Three weeks had come and gone, just half as long as the ordeal at Fort Muti had lasted, and the relieving column was cutting its arduous way through the dense bush to yet another isolated post whose fate hung in the balance.

The lieutenant had been offered his chance to return to the coast or to accompany the expedition, and, like a boy, he had chosen the latter alternative. His feeling of *malaise*—those shivers down his spine, that dragging pain, slight, but never absent from his left side—should have warned him. The surgeon did so; but the lieutenant merely laughed and lied to him, and threw dust in his eyes, for the surgeon was wounded and scarcely so keen at a diagnosis as was his wont. So the lieutenant journeyed with the rest, and was wild with delight at having four white men to talk to and something decent to eat, while the fizz of soda-water was as the plashing of fountains in his ears. His spirits were high, and his head just a little swelled with success. He began to talk big, and was somewhat of a nuisance with his tales of how 'I thought this' and how 'I did that'; but his fellow-officers pardoned much and smiled grimly. It was one thing, they told him, to fight from cover, and quite another to face death in the open; and the lieutenant was offended and sulked, and wondered why his head swam, and why he started at every sudden noise from beyond the double wall of creeper-clad trees which hemmed in the long, snake-like, crawling column.

He grew snappish and irritable, and was no pleasant companion. The others, who did not know him well, put him down as a conceited young ass, for their test of illness was appetite, and the lieutenant ate like a horse. They did not know that after each meal he was sick as a dog. The malaria, a peculiar and insidious form, fastened upon him slowly; for his body had been healthy, and he was young and sober, but its grip was none the less sure. His poisoned blood reacted on his brain, and as he stumbled forward he would start at the sight of a snake, and peer fearfully into the green screen behind him, where, had he but known it, glided the naked foe. At

last the column received a sudden check. Without warning, just as its head debouched from the long gloomy lane into an open space leading to a sluggish stream crossed by a narrow bridge, a heavy fire was opened upon it both in front and on the flanks. Men fell rapidly, but there was no grappling with the enemy in their beloved jungle. The bridge must be carried and the cluster of mud huts beyond it captured. The major glanced about him. His senior officer was down, shot in the leg, and the surgeon was already getting a tourniquet upon his femoral. The next in command was far in the rear; but the lieutenant was close at hand.

'Take a couple of dozen men and clear the bridge,' shouted the major. The lieutenant looked at him and looked at the bridge, a flimsy thing of cane and creepers, swept by a hot fire from the low mud wall, above which cropped up the domed roofs of the native huts. The brown river drifted sullenly beneath it. The air was full of death; men were becoming confused; it was no time to linger. Mechanically the lieutenant saluted; but he made no move, he issued no order.

Instead he crouched a little, and his hands shook, while his yellow lips went white.

'Do you hear me, lieutenant?' roared his commanding officer. 'Take that bridge, and at once, sir!'

Still the *ping, ping* went on, mingled now and then with dull, sickening thuds and the cry of men in pain, or the horrid gurgle which blood makes in the throats of those who die.

The lieutenant looked behind him. There was no way of escape.

'Lieutenant —, for the last time I order you to take the bridge.' The major's voice was harsh yet tremulous with passion. His sword pointed the way.

'Men of the police, I myself will lead you! Follow me!' he cried, and with a wild cheer the men of the leading company dashed at the hidden enemy, swarmed across the bridge, and took the village without the loss of a single file; and all the time the lieutenant lay and grovelled on the ground.

There was no D.S.O. for him; the service knew him no more. Men said he was a coward, and spoke low, for it was not a pleasant subject. They whispered that he was all right when behind a stockade, but no earthly use in a good-going tussle.

The parasite of malaria, the stealthy plasmodium, knew better. It alone could tell what became of the boy. No coward chooses to die as the lieutenant chose within a year of the relieving of Fort Muti.

## III.

Since early morn the thundering roar of cannon had echoed from kopje to kopje, mingling with the shriek of flying shells and the heavy rumble

of field artillery and ammunition wagons. The naval brigade had shelled the Boer position and been shelled in its turn. The deep Tugela, where of yore the river-horse had gambolled in ungainly play, on whose banks vast herds of antelope had roamed, in whose rapid waters the lion had oftentimes quenched his thirst, now swept as a dividing-line between the invader and the advancing force.

The low hills were full of armed Boers, the intersecting valleys patrolled by their horse, every point of vantage crowned by their heavy Krupps and far-reaching Creusots. Thousands of Mauser riflemen lay biding their time—rude, rough dwellers on the veldt, but stubborn foes and deadly marksmen. With keen eyes they watched the preparations for the British infantry attack, and marvelled at the courageous folly of the hated 'rooineks.'

To the south of the river the brown battalions were mustering, every man keen to get to close quarters with an enemy which loved cover as the prowling beast of prey loves the shade of rock and bush and scrub. Bugles and cavalry trumpets sounded loud and mellow, company after company stood to arms, troop after troop clattered joyfully to their appointed posts; while the eager artillerymen, brave to rashness, whirled, bounding and bumping, to the front, their teams straining at the harness, the white dust whirling from beneath the wheels of the gun-carriages.

A mounted officer spurred quickly to where the Imperial Scouts were drawn up in a long double line, two lines of steel and khaki upon two other lines of restless horses which smelt the battle from afar. He was met by their commander; a few brief words passed between them, and the cavalry were at once put in motion and trotted towards the river's brink.

Halting where they escaped the fire, they learned that a chance had been vouchsafed to them. The ford had to be tested, for the gallant Irish Brigade had been ordered to cross the Tugela and storm the kopjes. There was a call for volunteers; but every man was willing. A half-dozen, envied by their comrades, received the order, and amongst them was a young trooper who had found it hard to pass the doctors, and yet had managed to enlist, for men were wanted who could ride well and shoot straight, and he had given ample evidence that he possessed both accomplishments. His sallow face was lined and weary; trouble was marked upon his brow; he was old for his years; but in his eyes was a fiery glitter and his teeth were set. This time he would not fail his country.

'You are to search the ford, cross if possible, and return and report,' was the command, with an additional, 'Good luck to you, my lads.'

It had to be a dash, and a dash it was. Into the level raced the troop, and a hail of bullets came swishing past their ears, furlowing the earth

about them, scattering the dust which rose like water-jets on a pond when a thunder-shower pits its surface.

*Thud! crash!* One was down; but on they galloped. It was a marvel they were not swept away by such a storm of lead. Another horse plunged and shrieked in agony; another man pitched backwards and trailed one foot in stirrup upon the ground.

It could not be done; every man of them was wounded, and every horse but one. Its rider, a mere boy, shot in the shoulder, with a useless left arm, careered forward alone. He reached the water; with reddened spurs he forced his maddened steed into the stream. On and on they pressed; the river swirled about them. It was the ford, but now could scarce be so called, for the wily foe had dammed back the waters, which rose to the horse's withers and threatened to sweep the hoofs from under him. The drift deepened—there was a desperate struggle; then it shoaled.

Those who watched shouted aloud in admiration. Although they knew he could not hear, they now cried upon the venturesome trooper to return. He had crossed—the first man to cross—and the brigade was to follow him, to the death if need be; but it were a pity if he should now fall.

'Heavens! he must be mad!' exclaimed a staff-officer, as through his binoculars he saw the horseman force his jaded beast to take the slope—saw him, alone and unprotected, face the impregnable position. 'Come back, you fool!' he cried; and suddenly the horse came, and its rider with it.

Struck on the neck, the dripping charger wheeled in fright and dashed back upon its trail. Struck in a dozen places, the trooper reeled, clutched at its mane, and then, as they floundered from ford to pool and from pool to deep and rushing current, he lost his hold and was swept away.

Swinging upon the bosom of the Tugela, sweeping to join the Buffalo and the sea, wild-eyed and blood-stained, drifted the shot-riddled corpse of Trooper —, whom none knew to be an ex-lieutenant.

#### CASTLES IN SPAIN.

CASTLES in Spain! oft in my youthful pride,  
When virile fancy widespread wings hath ta'en,  
Thy sun-kissed turrets have I clear descried:  
Castles in Spain!

And if 'neath toil-spent years faith 'gan to wane,  
Still I gazed forth with hope, nor did I chide,  
Seeking stray sunbeams through the mist and rain.

Frail hopes borne seawards on the lapsing tide  
Fade faint and far from me with sad refrain;  
Into the brooding night they softly glide:  
Castles in Spain!

GEO. H. LUDOLF.